

Peace.

How blest the heart that knows thy peace—
The peace which floweth as a river;
So calm, so clear, it ne'er shall cease,
But, broad and deep, flow on forever.

What grief and fear and venom'd sting
Thy world-tost children often carry!
The burden to thy feet they bring,
But leave it only while they tarry.

"He careth for you." O my Lord,
Thou art my God—there's none above thee;
All things, according to thy Word,
Shall work for good to them that love thee.

Then let me cast on thee my care;
Dwell in thy smile when days are dreary;
Trust thee through all, howe'er it fare;
Rest in thine arms when faint and weary.

But, more than all, grant me the grace
To do thy will, O gracious Giver;
Then may I hope to know thy peace—
The peace which floweth as a river.

ELSIE DUNDEE, IN PRESBYTERIAN

The Diamond Ring.

BY J. H. WOKST.

No my daughter I do not see any good reason for purchasing you a diamond ring. Your fingers seem healthy and strong and what additional strength a diamond ring would impart I cannot understand.

"Sadie Dimple is getting one?"

Oh! that's it. Because Sadie Dimple is getting one you think you ought to have one also.

"You won't be outdone by Sadie?"

Well then run and help your mother get supper. Get up early in the morning and assist your mother like a good girl and take an interest in your work. Read useful books and study your Bible that your mind and heart may be cultivated, then you will not be undone by any other girl in the neighborhood. The jewel that will grow in your heart will outshine all the silly baubles that glitter on silly women's fingers. A kind word for everybody, a smile for the children, and a willing hand to assist your hard worked mother will go further toward making you a true woman than all the diamonds and finery in the world.

"What harm is there in a ring?"

Oh that depends upon circumstances. I am certain that a real fine ring will not add anything to your character or mind or heart that will please God or make you a better girl. Then you may learn to depend on the ring for merit instead of busy hands and a loving heart. A great many do. They have fine dresses and sparkling jewels and many admirers but are not useful. They don't do the world any good, and only silly people can act that way.

"You wouldn't?"

No I hope not. I hope you will be somebody instead of a human butterfly that cares only for wearing fine clothes and making a show of useless beauty. Remember that true beauty is what beauty does even if the dress is plain and out of style, while the finest and costliest dresses often cover cold and even wicked hearts. It was very wrong of you to desire a ring in order to outshine Sadie Dimple. Let the people admire Sadie's ring all they please, but you be a loving, industrious, studious little lady and then everybody will love and admire you. I would never consent to put up my heart and mind in competition with a diamond ring. Anybody that can be helped along in society by wearing a ring or a few yards of extra ribbon are very weak minded. I want my little girl to be loved and respected for her wisdom, her kindness, and her usefulness.

"They will laugh at you?"

Well let them laugh. If powder and jewels and gaudy trinkets make people laugh at a sensible girl, then I wouldn't want to make myself silly by trying to imitate them. Be modest and tidy and all sensible people will think more of you than if you were a twittering simpering flirt, and I believe you will think more of yourself. You will need good substantial friends all through life, but if you allow such giddy simpletons to turn your head you may lose the respect and good will of all you now love and all who now love you. A good character

is a jewel that you can wear when your head is gray and your body, bent with age, is no longer comely. A good name will never perish, and the kind words you speak to the poor, and the loving acts you perform will make you happy a thousand times during life, and will prove a rich reward in heaven; while the jewels and silks you wear will all perish.

"You don't want a ring?"

That's a sensible girl. It is not the cost of the ring so much as the reason for which you desired it. I hope that hereafter my little girl will never desire to shine with any borrowed light. A lady is not composed of finger rings and jewels. A lady cannot be purchased in stores and millinery shops. True, they resemble ladies, but a true lady is one in life, character and conduct. One that would scorn to be more respected on account of a fine dress or costly bonnet, and one that would never once think herself better than other well-behaved people on account of her fashionable clothing.

A girl that is so empty headed and unloved that she must resort to paint and jewels and other extras to attract attention is not worthy of much attention. If she would cultivate her mind and exhibit a lovely disposition, people would be bound to respect her. Then she couldn't be one thing at home and something quite different away from home. She wouldn't be a lazy, expensive, peevish girl at home and a butterfly in the ball-room. Oh no; she wouldn't be able to put her lady-ship in the bureau drawer and jewel case, and then go down into the parlor and pout while her mother drudges in the kitchen.

Association or Convention.

The Baptists of Virginia held their State Association recently in Richmond, Va. It was my fortune to be present during some of their deliberations. I could not but think of my own struggling church and Brother Holsinger begging hard for a few thousand dollars. In this Association it took but a few moments to raise \$750 to assist in building a church where the congregation was too poor to complete the building, and another \$100 for another; and so the good work went on, besides the many thousands they had given for home missions and foreign missions during the year. The Methodist conference was in session at the same time. They raised \$1000 cash in a few moments, from the preachers to assist in building a colored school. I am credibly informed that these preachers generally bring all their surplus to conference with them and seldom take any back. Yes, it has been known that they gave all, and God provided other means to take them home. Brethren, it does us good to see ourselves as others see us. We can learn a great deal of good from others. We do not possess all the good that is in the world.

We need a convention or a general association, (not to formulate laws), but for the interchange of thought and concerted action upon all the vital questions of our church affairs as a body. I verily believe could we bring our leading brethren together from all over the United States, have our best workers and speakers to talk with the people, that it would be one long and powerful step forward in the cause of the Brethren Church. The College debt would be raised and a complete and thorough Home Mission Board could be organized. This is all important work, we do not need a foreign mission yet, we do not know how to give yet that these may be supported and foreign mission work will naturally grow out of Home Mission. This Convention is not to meddle in congregational affairs. Let our church government be congregational and this supreme; but let each church, (let not one shrink the God given duty) send delegates who can fitly represent them in all the work which the whole church is interested in doing. Let these delegates be men with broad minds and big hearts. There are two things which need the immediate attention of the whole church, and possibly this first Convention (for it must meet every year) could attend to the third. But first must come the College debt then Home Missions and then if possible, some means be taken for the wide-spread distribution of tracts, Bibles, etc. The convention must meet every year to receive the reports of the different

committees, and to broaden the work, devising means to meet the growing necessities. Each church should have a report to read upon its growth its work, its prospects, and necessities. I know that there is a fear of what we have been relieved from, but this should not continue. We must remember that we are no longer children, that the harvest is ready and God commands us to reap. Our church is growing and the world is looking on. Yea God is looking, and waiting to see, if we, having put our hand to the plow, are going to look back. The time has come when some of the work, care and anxiety, which a few faithful self-sacrificing brethren have been bearing should be lifted and put upon other shoulders, on the whole church. God will bless these faithful and much persecuted soldiers, but should he call them home to enjoy the blessed reward, upon whom would their mantle fall? Where, I ask, is the brother who would take the self-sacrificing Holsinger's place? For God's sake, for the sake of his cause, the church and those who are looking to us for help, let us stop this childish play! Let us go to work systematically. Thoroughly organize (not a denomination) but the work of a denomination who profess to live Christ and his humanity, our brotherhood, the whole world, every individual, saint and sinner. We need money to pay our debts, money and preachers to take the words of life to those who are isolated. God and this world has no use for a man who locks up his money in bonds, or holds his crops because the price does not suit, thus taking money out of circulation, thereby doing no one any good. The man who has grain to hold has money for God which he ought to give. The man who does not put his money into use, turning it over and over, thereby blessing the land, is of no service in this land.

Come, let us have this convention or association. Give plenty of time, let each church know of it and let each church send their best men as delegates. It will only take one meeting of this kind to pay off the College debt, and also organize a Home Mission Board, and the next year we will be ready for work. Let's have this great social gathering. God will bless it. Our cause will prosper. God will be in the work if we have God in us, which is our privilege and duty.

D. R.

The Difficulties of the Bible.

It is said the Bible is not a plain book, and is therefore far from perfect. It contains so much that is difficult and dark, that is difficult to think of it as in any sense the revelation of a God who was anxious to disclose to us even spiritual truth. It may be said in reply, that if the Bible did not contain difficulties it would not be true, and would not resemble the other works of God. What did Peter say of the Epistles of Paul, with which he, like us, had wrestled sometimes in vain? In them, he says, "are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, that is, distort, pervert from their real meaning, as they do the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." There should be comfort in this passage to many of us. Remember how Paul's involved sentences, his prolonged and difficult arguments, and his frequent parentheses, diverting the channel of his thought, have worried and perplexed us, there is an innocent though half-mischievous pleasure in thinking that Peter was worried in the same way. His ardent, undisciplined mind, even when divinely illumined, could not see quite though all which his beloved brother had written. Paul had long been a sort of stumbling-block to him, and he acknowledged that some things in his Epistles are hard to be understood. Other Scriptures as well as Paul's are difficult, and the Bible warns its readers not to destroy themselves against these stones of offense.

It is sad to remember how often this warning is unheeded. Many have made shipwreck of their faith by steering their craft against every rock on the coast of this ocean of truth. Wise navigators prefer a safe channel, an open sea; but restless, impracticable, and wilful minds often covet a dangerous shore. They go through the Bible, not like a traveler who keeps the safe highway, but like wayward children who climb over the rocks and